

**Protocol
For
Incidental Take Authorization**

Western Slender Glass Lizard (*Ophisaurus a. attenuatus*)

Note

If carrying out a given protocol is not feasible, or multiple listed species in a given management area pose conflicts, contact the Bureau of Endangered Resources at 608/264-6057. Staff in BER will work with Integrated Science Services (Research) staff, species experts and managers to establish an acceptable protocol for a given site that will allow for incidental take without further legal Consultation or public notice

I. Species Background Information

A. Status

State Status: Endangered.

USFWS Region 3 Species of Management Concern: No

Number of Known WI Sites: 37, in Adams, Columbia, Green Lake, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Sauk and Waushara counties.

Global Range: Southern Wisconsin and northwestern Indiana west to southeastern Nebraska and eastern Colorado and south through eastern Texas and western Louisiana.

B. Habitat

General Habitat Description: Inhabits dry- to dry-mesic prairies, oak savannas and openings in oak woods. In south-central WI, most often observed near the edge of prairies and in small openings adjacent to oak woods. Sandy soils are critical but a moderate to dense vegetative layer is very important, as opposed to sparsely vegetated sandy soils associated with the most xeric dry-sand prairies.

Critical Habitat Features: Sandy soil

Over-wintering Habitat: Same as summer habitat.

C. Life History

Home Range: Ranges from 0.2 - 5.0 acres with males generally having larger home ranges than females. In Kansas, where glass lizard densities are much higher, home ranges vary from 0.3-1.1 acres.

Communal Behaviors: NA

Site Fidelity: Unknown

Nest Location: NA

Breeding: Mating usually occurs in spring following emergence from hibernation.

Nesting Period: Females lay up to 17 eggs from mid-June into July. Males and females mature in their second full year.

Activity periods:

Seasonal: First become active in mid-late April. During the summer, two periods of increased activity have been observed, one in early June and again in late July to the end of August. They will begin to hibernate in early-mid September depending on temperatures. Glass lizards are typically active until daytime highs drop to the low 60's in the fall.

Daily: Glass lizards are strictly diurnal. Their optimum temperature ranges from 68° - 79°F, and in the heat of summer they prefer mornings and especially late afternoons. Despite appropriate temperatures in the morning, dew seems to limit their activity as it does their invertebrate prey.

II. Management Protocols For Authorizing Incidental Take

If the management activity is for the purpose of recovering, maintaining or improving the grassland, prairie or savanna ecosystem that includes habitat for western slender glass lizards, then incidental take is allowed if these conditions are followed.

If incidental take of western slender glass lizard results from the activity, please notify BER so we can reevaluate this guidance.

A. Burning:

1. If conducted prior to April 15 or after October 1, there are no restrictions.
2. If conducted between April 15 and October 1, should occur only on days when ambient air temperatures remain below 55° F when sunny, and below 60° F on cloudy days, during the hours involving the burn.

B. Mowing/Haying:

1. Herbaceous Vegetation Mowing should be done as follows:
 - a. In small patches that are mowed in a monthly rotational pattern, with no more than 33% of the available grassland habitat on the site affected in any one year,
AND
 - b. If done between April 15 and October 1, conduct mowing in the morning and be completed before the air temperature reaches 55° F or on cool days (ie, when highest temp is below 55° F).
(Note: Mowing on cloudy days is preferred.)
2. Mechanical brush-mowing should be done as follows:
 - a. Conduct between October 1 and April 14,
OR
 - b. If done between April 15 and October 1, conduct in the morning and be completed before the air temperature reaches 55° F, or on cool days (i.e., when highest temp is below 55° F).

C. Selective Brush/Tree-cutting:

Selective brush-cutting (i.e. chain saw) may occur without restriction.

D. Grazing:

Light to moderate grazing (0 - <1.0 head per acre) is allowed but should be terminated if more than 50% of the ground layer vegetation is reduced to less than 8 inches in height.

E. Herbiciding:

To the maximum extent possible, herbiciding should occur during the lizards dormant period (Oct. 1 – April 15).

Where active season herbiciding is necessary to control herbaceous vegetation, spot treat, preferably with a low persistence/short half-life herbicide (i.e. Round-up®), using wick, sponge or hand-held spray applications, not broadcast applications.

Basal-bark or cut-stump-treatment methods should be used when treating woody vegetation.

Definitions

Definition of “Site”: A given field or habitat patch and all of the directly adjoining (contiguous) suitable grassland habitat that is under DNR ownership or for which there is a management agreement.